

The Woman's Page of The Times-Dispatch

An Adornment of Childhood

Let's begin it "once upon a time," and, needless to remark, a long time ago, since it makes it much more interesting and sounds like the most approved and fascinating "never-never-land" story. You always like to shut your eyes and think of the tin can knights and flowing blue satin sweet hearts for whom the patiently twanged on lutes, and similar instruments known to fame in that day, besides playing a couple of dragons before breakfast, as continuing on somewhere out into space in their drafty old castles and attendance on Spanish wars. Thus it is with affairs of childhood. But to return from the chase of butterflies and such, and start all over again, I am wondering if you really wore one, too. It was the insignia of your childish indiscretions and was worn upon the chest as close to your croupy little throat as two safety pins could hold it. The days of the big snow when you forgot your gum shoes, and another time when you spent the day in the country and in trying to follow your fletcher friend, lamed in the middle of the creek instead of safely on the other side. Or, of course, you never told any one about it, and sat huddled all day in your freezing wet clothes steaming in front of the fire and were entirely overcome when your state of mind and mouth that would not shut were discovered.

Then, they put it on. It was several inches square and made of bannel and soaked in oil and an article chronicled in the book of simple remedies as mutton fat. As long as the cold snap continued you were held on the tip of some kindly soul and well toasted in front of the fire night and morning, and that dreadful plaster was carefully planned to the front of every frock you put on. Some time later it would be announced that your cold having stood every test known to the cook and a solemn assembly of disinterested relatives, the plaster should have a tiny piece cut from it every day, and at the end of a certain time the pins were removed and you "lost" it off. This article of your wearing apparel having become greatly reduced in size it was a sensation absolutely indescribable—that of "losing" your plaster. That got to be intimate friends, and your personal feelings concerning the little patch of bannel directly across your throat was something akin to mingled pride and affection. Probably the boy across the street didn't have one—at any rate he had not yet reached the stage of cutting tiny pieces from it every morning.

O, I am sure that you have worn one, and mutton fat lives in your memory along with the bannel with the red knitted trimming on it, and it needs only the fog of the faintest possible thought to pull the string in your mind. Back at once turn the pages in our own little book. This is burn warmly, there is a drowsy sensation of some one telling how "Jackson made the Yankees skedaddle out the Valley," and the bit of bannel is warm against our heart.

DRENT WITT.

Furniture Renovations.

Our grandmothers tell of how they used to polish the beautiful old mahogany by frequent rubbing simply with the fat palm of the hand. No lotions or polishes were used, unless one should consider that time-honored ingredient known as "elbow grease," for surely a goodly quantity of this vigorous compound must have been required in polishing the big, old-fashioned pieces of mahogany by this process.

We now have many assistants in the work of keeping our treasured heirlooms bright and clean and glowing. Housewives are learning quick methods of obtaining desired results, by taking note of the work of experts. They have found that mahogany, rosewood and black walnut should be rubbed with linseed oil or crude petroleum, a very little being put on at a time, and rubbed in thoroughly, until the surface looks like a mirror. If the rubbing is done about once a month, instead of being neglected to the period of semi-annual house-cleaning, it will not be at all difficult to get a good shine with very little rubbing; but the first application may require special effort.

Any of the natural woods that are not varnished can be polished in the same way. But this plan will not do for varnished surfaces. A simple washing with cold water will be best for these. But if the varnished furniture continues to look dull and soiled, and seems to require soap, beware of strong soda. It is best to avoid soda in any form. Warm water in which ten leaves have been steeped will give better results in cleaning, and will not remove the gloss.

When the varnished furniture becomes scratched, neither washing nor polishing will suffice to remove the scars. It will be necessary to go over the spots with a camel's hair brush, and shellac varnish until they disappear. Nothing should be allowed to touch the varnished spots until the shellac is thoroughly dry. For the little breaks on the corners of furniture, and splinters of the wood that have been knocked off, carefully save all the little pieces, and glue them in place with strong linseed glue. Then touch lightly with stain to match the furniture, the whitened edges (pink) with shellac varnish and the marks of repair will disappear.

Spring Millinery.

At this early date novelties are extremely scarce and all one can do is to wait for the arrival of the later fashions.

It is expected that small flowers will be made into bands, circlets and other made effects, the flowers being applied flat to the hat or band. Small roses in the new radiance shades are very good looking, as are also combinations in which forget-me-nots and pansies, all colors, not perhaps of the rainbow, all of the latest color card. Hydrangeas and lilies of the valley are separated and used in this way, as are cowslips, French daisies and miniature pansies and violets.

Pansies, it will be remembered, were about the only flowers that were smitten upon last year, and a continuance of their reign is expected and planned. All shades of reds, pinks and purples are good in flowers. The radiance shades, as it name implies, are varied, but all rather dark in tone—really a puzzling combination of color, rather subdued tones.—The Millinery Trade Review.

Dress of Indian Women.

In this day of sartorial complexities, when women play large amounts for exclusive designs of frocks or ball gowns, it rests the mind to think of the Indian woman in whose style of dress there has been no change for 4,000 years. They all wear the "sari," which forms the skirt, the waist, and the headress all in one.



AFTERNOON GOWNS IN SATIN, VELVET AND CREPE DE CHINE.

L'Art de la Mode.

White Satin Petticoats

A new idea that has found a strong place in the winter styles is the white satin petticoat with its row of buttons on the front. The word petticoat is used in the ancient sense.

It is really the skirt of the gown, but only the front of it shows under a full skirt. The idea was first introduced in August, and it was whispered among those who knew that he bought the design from a famous wholesale house, and this is probable, because of its popularity now.

One rarely sees any distinct how style grow universal when it has been invented by a great house at a high price for an individual. It is when a wholesale house with its splendid corps of designers sells this idea to many houses that it becomes enounced as a fashion.

The white satin petticoat first appeared as a drop skirt for a long tunic of black satin, which had its selvage for a finish in order that the sharp outline of the black against the white should not be clouded or dulled by ornament.

The bodice continued as the skirt began with a short waistcoat of white satin fastened with white satin buttons down the front and a surprise drape with sleeves of black satin also depending on the sedge to sharpen the contrast. From this acorn has grown an oak.

There are skirts of white satin, of gray velvet, of white crepe de chine, of white chiffon with brocade velvet flowers, all fastened up the front with white satin buttons, and sometimes loops of white braid are added.

The tunics are dark in color, sharp in contrast, and often of another fabric, although it is not to be denied that the use of satin over satin gives the most effective result.

You know this is a good idea for women who want to make over gowns that were once in style and must be worn for the rest of the season. It may take two frocks to complete one, and when one advises such economy

one believes the mockery of the old recipe "watch your horse's mouth."

The papers and magazines are filled with splendid suggestions for economy and alteration—if a woman only had the materials. There is no doubt that old flannel curtains make excellent overskirts for velvet gowns, but why take it for granted that any one has flannel curtains? It is also true that partly worn French hand-brodered blouses make admirable small pincushions, but how many women have the expensive French blouses?

So, it seems to me, most of the suggestions for economy take too much for granted, and the suggestion of two satin gowns to make one is certainly shining along this line.

If you are in the glorious gown made of enough money to go out and treat yourself to a frock intended for afternoon or evening affairs, look well into this idea of the white satin petticoat as a foundation. It is bound to be a leading fashion within a few weeks; these of us who go in the highways and byways of clothes see it here and there in alluring forms.

It seems that the only color that must not be put over it is white, for all white has not been in first fashion for three years, despite the vehement protests of many against this edict. White coat suits are ultra smart, but they are loaded down with black fur, merely to carry out the consuming passion for black and white that has taken hold of the civilized world.

The tunics that are put over these white satin petticoats are not the ones that have been popular for three years, short in front, not divided anywhere, and sloping a bit in the back. The new tunics drop from a high waist line to the hem, are opened in front and usually draped up a bit at the sides like a pair of window curtains. If one can afford fur, so much the better, and to refer to that question of economy again—if one has old pieces of fur here is the chance to use them.

Wonderful Evening Wrap

Fashion dictates this season that superb velvets, satins and metal brocades combine to produce magnificent evening wraps that are supreme in richness.

Purs play an important part for trimmings. These are mingled with the finest chiffons and most exquisite laces.

Many vivid-toned linings in the darling new shades of cerise and petunia suggest the audacious art of Paul Poiret.

One resplendent wrap, copied from the Louis XIII period is of supple blue velvet and heavy gold lace, with edgings of soft white fur.

The wrap is cut on perfectly straight lines, but has ample width. The upper portion is of the gold embroidery, which forms a square-cut yoke in front and back; but in front it folds well over to the left side, ending in a point, and from there the wrap buttons to the waist line with jeweled buttons.

The sleeves show the newest feature. They are cut in one with the wrap, like very wide kimono sleeves that extend from the shoulder to the waist line; but, unlike the Japanese style, they are gathered into a cuff of gold lace and fur at the wrist.

On each side of the garment under the sleeve is a broad panel of lace applied in three sections, each a little wider than the one above it, that reaches to the hem.

This is edged with fur and reaches quite to the bottom of the skirt of the gown worn underneath. The wrap is lined throughout with cerise satin veiled with gold-colored chiffon, giving quite an unusual effect.

The theatre cap designed to wear with this wrap is of fine embroidery on gold net with a twist of gold ribbon about its head line and an upstanding jeweled ornament on the left side.

The design can be copied, if you wish, in any suitable material, for the line and style are extremely good, and the wrap is comfortable and easy to slip on.

Two women were commiserating a friend whose husband had lost his money, whose family had to move into a small house, and whose daughters had to go to work.

A third woman said: "You might as well save your pity. I met her yesterday and she looked more contented than I have ever seen her. When I began to sympathize with her she replied: 'I feel dreadfully about Tom, and it is hard on the girls, but you cannot imagine the relief not to have to keep up appearances any longer!'"

Any one who is struggling to live beyond her means knows what that woman meant. There is nothing so wearing to the nerves, so ruinous to the disposition, so destructive to moral fibre, as trying to keep up appearances.

No one advocates wearing our heart on our sleeve or taking all the world into confidence about our financial make, but even that is less hurtful than the silly struggle to be something one is not.

Americans are too prone to this pretense. Our ingrained love of luxury, our habit of living up to the income, make it all too easy to live beyond our means.

Then begins the struggle. Instead of curtailing expenses and simplifying living, false pride steps in, debt, worry and discontent come close on its trail. The family continues to dress, entertain, amuse itself, while the harassed father works to make money.

To what end? It isn't as if the smash could be averted? And what is gained? Who save the silliest of natures is not more content in the small house than in watching the big one go to rack and ruin for lack of money to keep it in repair. What girl is happier in a simple gown that is paid for than in a creation for which she is being dunned? Who save the utterly imprudent or selfish woman fails to worry harder when she struggles to keep up appearances?

The very nature of this struggle makes for discontent. When we face issues and make the best of them, we may not love the effort, but we are proud of our bravery and common sense. But let us ape our wealthy friends, and the fret of the struggle sours and embitters us.

False pride is at the bottom of keeping up appearances. Economy is dreaded less for itself than for its effect on social position. Suppose one is invited to fewer parties, does she lose her place in the world because she does not pose as wealthy when she is hard up?

Two brothers of a firm got into tight places financially. The family of the one frankly acknowledged it and met it sensibly. The mother dispensed with all but one maid, and the daughters started to earn their clothes. One tolerated children, the other made cakes and desserts.

The family of the other brother tried to bluff it out. Outwardly they acted as if affairs were as prosperous as ever. The girls were as capable as their parents. They made their own clothes, but pretended that an expensive dressmaker and milliner were doing them out. The same number of servants were retained, but the family stunted themselves in food to pay their wages.

What was the result? The one brother, helped by his family, had the courage to make a new start, while the other brother, harassed by growing debts, lost heart and died. The girls who did not keep up appearances lost nothing in popularity. Their friends admired their pluck, and showed them so. The other girls lost in looks and spirits, and when the final crash came, with their father's death they had lost the respect of those who would gladly have helped them earlier.

It is foolish for any girl to feel she will lose caste by work. She may not have time for frivolities, but there will be pleasure a-plenty if she does not let the necessity to earn her living make her a sensitive recluse.

A Novelty Dinner

A small dinner given during this month can be planned for just twelve guests and arranged as a calendar affair, following a plan which is new and attractive.

The idea is to have each place represent a certain month of the year, the entire twelve being suggested by the hospitable board, and to have place cards, favors and other decorations at each cover suggest the month which is there intended.

Thus the January cover is trimmed with snowflakes, or the place card there might be hand-painted with this flower, if preferred, while the favor is a calendar for the year. The place plate at this cover may be laid upon a bed of raw cotton snow.

For February the favor might take the form of a heart-shaped candy box, if the occupant of the seat be a woman, or a silver, heart-shaped cigar case, if a man. For the place card have an old-fashioned lace paper valentine, or the place card could be a valentine, while the favor represents Washington's birthday, another celebration of the same month, by a hatchet filled with bonbons, a cocked hat or the like. Have more snow here and sprinkle with silver dust or draw tinsel rope around the cover in the form of a wavy circle.

For March have a daffodil or crocus or any early spring flower, and in combination with these have Easter rabbits or colored Easter eggs or chickens. Again, wild March hares, cut from paper, would be decorative. The name of the guest may be tied around the neck of a plaster rabbit or an Easter chick.

For April the entire cover should be tricked out with April 1 sells and jokes, and scattered with the many jokes confetti. Have the place card cut out and tinted in the shape of a jester head, with a cluster of real little bells tacked on to it, and in addition to the name of the guest a nonsense quotation from "Alice in Wonderland."

May, flowery May, is represented by a little basket of violets. The handle of the basket should be tall, and from it are drawn strands of different-colored baby ribbon, somewhat resembling a Maypole. The gift or place card can be attached to the handle of the basket. Another plan would be to have the cover here strewn with flowers and to have the souvenir an illustrated copy of "The May Queen," by Tennyson, or a collection of verse about flowers.

The flowers at the June cover will be of roses, and from the ceiling in front of this place hangs a tiny Oriental lantern, with lighted paper inside. The lanterns which are but a few inches around should be chosen for this.

Of course, there are many other decorations which could be substituted. When the cover is humorously intended and for a man (one who is the head of a household particularly), have it covered with a strip of green baize or paper muslin, choosing for the favor a toy lawn mower, to suggest the pleasures of a commuter's life in June.

For July, if the scenic plan is preferred, replace the ordinary water glass with a huge one of lead lemonade, and tie the place card with baby ribbons to the straw thereof.

Increase the gift appropriate for the guest who is to sit there in raw cotton and brown tissue paper, cut and glued into the shape of a huge mosquito which practically fills the place plate.

The August cover might represent a wee tennis court, with the aid of a doll's tennis net and balls. Have a wee doll dressed as a tennis player, and on it pin the name of the guest, written on a card.

For September strew the cover with a little seashore sand, fine and dry, which is to be brushed away before the meal, and decorate with shells, or, if it is to be comic, strew with tiny crabs and lobsters and their ilk from the Japanese store. A basket of shells with a place card tied to the handle makes a pretty souvenir for a woman, while one designed for a man will usually be of a comic turn. Thus a bonbonniere in the form of a steamer trunk may contain a tiny crustacean or the like.

For October many ideas are available. A pretty one is to be cut from the paper, which comes in a design of autumn leaves, a number of these leaves with which to decorate the cover. These may be used in connection with tiny pumpkin lanterns, witches and black cats of Halloween.

Or, if the guest is a motorist, have a toy motor filled with chrysanthemums scudding across the colored leaves, and conducting it, a doll named for the person who will occupy that chair.

For November the favor might be an old-fashioned dipper, and in a choice candlestick. Enclose this cover with a string of cranberries and tie the name of the guest to the neck of a strutting turkey. One of the tiny imitation pies sold in toy shops, or a small ham, either one might be added in honor of the feast of diners this month.

Holly and mistletoe deck the Christmas cover, amid which rises a little pasteboard Santa filled with candies, and a tiny evergreen tree with the names of the guests written on a star at the very top. Any souvenir intended here can be tied with Christmas ribbon and sealed with the pretty holly leaves.

It would be amusing to elaborate the calendar plan of the dinner by introducing into the menu dainties which are characteristic in a certain degree of the season.

Where strawberries cannot be had at this time the extremely realistic little ones of marzipan can be substituted.

Cherries that can hardly be distinguished from the real ones are also obtainable, and these, with the berries, could be used for the side dishes.

Spring lamb or chicken and a salad of early vegetables decorated with flowers cut from vegetables represent the early months of the year: white nuts, grapes, old-fashioned doughnuts, and cookies bespeak the hearty appetite of autumn, and winter is discovered in ices molded as snowballs or snow men passed with coconut feed cakes.

Last of all, the maid or butler passes a huge pile of the bran order from which depend ribbons or lengths of crepe paper. To each strand is attached a card, on which is written a quotation about some particular month of the year.

Each guest to whom the pile is presented draws a ribbon, and is then expected to name the author or supply the missing word. If he can do so correctly, he is eligible to draw for a prize, which must also be appropriate to the occasion.

Sometimes this dinner will be followed with a dance, in which case each future dancer is given a tissue-paper headress trimmed and cut in to represent the month represented by his seat at table.